



USAID | JORDAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

January 7, 2014

**Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number: RFA-278-14-000001
USAID Gender Program
Amendment 2**

The purpose of this Amendment is to respond to questions received from potential applicants.

Accordingly, the questions and answers are attached.

Sincerely,

Bruce F. McFarland
Agreement Officer

Question No. 1: The RFA states that Component 3 will be achieved substantially through other USAID activities and interventions. Would USAID be able to provide further clarification as to how this is envisioned as being accomplished operationally? Does USAID anticipate that the Gender Program will make recommendations on gender-focused services to the other USAID program teams? Will the a) funding and b) implementation management for these activities be provided by the Gender Program or by the other USAID programs, or a combination?

Additionally, does USAID envision the two examples specified in the first complete paragraph on p. 12 (“Interventions under this component to support and create sustainable safe spaces and engaging women and girls locally ...”) as definite activities to be undertaken as compared with the other examples being provided illustratively?

Answer No. 1: The Gender Program is intended to focus mainly on Components 1 and 2. The Gender Program will also support the implementation of other USAID activities and interventions by providing the needed technical assistance as appropriate and will also make recommendations on gender-focused services to other USAID program teams.

The Gender Program is envisioned to award minimal grants under Component 3. Funding for grants under this Component, if any, should be budgeted for under the Windows of Opportunity line item.

Applicants are to propose activities that are based on their technical approach.

Question No. 2: Could USAID please confirm that a range of mechanisms (subgrants, directly implemented projects, etc.) is envisioned under the “Windows of Opportunity” reserve fund?

Answer No. 2: Confirmed.

Question No. 3: Page 27 of the RFA provides guidance to only address phase 1 (first three years) of the program in the cost application. Could USAID please confirm that technical application should cover both phases?

Answer No. 3: The technical application should only cover Phase 1 of the program.

Question No. 4: Is there a MB limit for e-mail attachments of cost and technical proposals?

Answer No. 4: The federal requirement is to submit applications through

www.grants.gov. Please follow the website's submission instructions.

Question No. 5: On P. 27, Initial Cost Application Format, the RFA states that the "initial cost application must address only phase one of the project (the first three years)." Should the technical application also cover only the first three years?

Answer No. 5: See Answer No. 3.

Question No. 6: Regarding Component 3:

- a. Would USAID provide additional information about or examples of the types of activities to be carried out directly by the Recipient under Component 3?
- b. For budgeting purposes, should the applicant's budget for Component 3 include funding for direct program interventions in addition to technical assistance and capacity building for activities and programs across USAID's portfolio?

**Answer No. 6: a. See Answer No. 1 and the description of component 3 in the RFA.
b. The Program should budget for technical assistance and capacity building under this Component per the applicant's proposed technical approach.**

Question No. 7: Given the wide range of activities possible under each component, would USAID provide some additional guidance on the level of effort/percent of budget to be allocated to each component?

Answer No. 7: Applicants should allocate funds per their proposed technical approach.

Question No. 8: On page 14, the RFA states that "two evaluations will be conducted by external evaluators for this project." Would USAID confirm that these will be funded separately by USAID and should not be included in the applicant's budget?

Answer No. 8: USAID confirms that the referenced two evaluations will be funded separately by USAID and should not be included in the applicant's budget.

Question No. 9: In addition to the external evaluations commissioned by USAID to assess the impact of the program, does USAID expect the recipient to conduct internal performance or impact evaluation(s) as well?

Answer No. 9: USAID expects the recipient to conduct assessments and evaluations as needed to report back on performance per the Project Monitoring Plan.

Question No. 10: On page 26, the RFA lists the qualifications required for other proposed Key Personnel. This list includes “Demonstrated experience in conflict mitigation.” Would USAID consider removing this requirement?

Answer No. 10: Please note the following change in RFA requirements:

Each of other proposed key personnel must have a minimum of:

- **Five years of relevant experience in developing countries**
- **Demonstrated experience in gender related activities**
- **Understanding of Jordanian communities and the Jordanian political system**
- **A bachelor’s degree in a relevant field**
- **Fluency in English and Arabic**

Qualifications of all other proposed key personnel should collectively include the following:

- **Demonstrated experience in building constructive relationships between government and civil society**
- **Demonstrated experience in applying participatory methods**
- **Demonstrated experience and knowledge in establishing procedures and systems relevant to the project**
- **Demonstrated experience in conflict mitigation**

Question No. 11: Would USAID please confirm that the table of contents, acronym list, cover, and transmittal letter are not included in the 15-page limit for the technical application?

Answer No. 11: Confirmed.

Question No. 12: Would USAID please confirm that the following are the required/approved annexes for the technical application:

- a. Key Personnel resumes
- b. Key Personnel letters of commitment
- c. List of all relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements

Answer No. 12: Confirmed.

Question No. 13: Would USAID please confirm that only Key Personnel resumes should be included in the resume annex?

Answer No. 13: Confirmed.

Question No. 14: Would USAID consider allowing the summary organizational chart (required on P. 27, Management) to be included as an annex?

Answer No. 14: The summary organizational chart is to be included as an annex.

Question No. 15: On page 27, the RFA states that “the application shall include an Annex listing of all its relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years.”

- a. Should this information also be submitted for major partners?
- b. In the list of all relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, may Applicants include those from other donors?

**Answer No. 15: a. This information must be submitted for all partners.
b. Yes.**

Question No. 16: Would USAID please confirm that Key Personnel references (page 24, Key Personnel) are not included in the two-page limit for the resumes?

Answer No. 16: Key personnel references are to be included in the two-page limit for the resumes.

Question No. 17: On page 24, Technical Application Format, the RFA states that “Applications shall be submitted in Word format...” Would USAID confirm that Key Personnel letters of commitment may be submitted in pdf (because they must be signed)?

Answer No. 17: Confirmed.

Question No. 18: On page 23, the RFA states that “Applications shall be submitted electronically at www.grants.gov in two separate parts: (a) technical application and (b) summary budget application.” Would USAID please confirm that attaching separate technical and summary budget documents to the grants.gov submission application will meet this requirement?

Answer No. 18: Confirmed.

Question No. 19: Would USAID please clarify if the initial cost application should include a separate summary budget document, in addition to the summary required in the SF 424a?

Answer No. 19: The initial cost application should only include the summary required in the SF 424a.

Question No. 20: Would USAID please confirm that the requirement that the applicant state the validity period for the application (P. 31, point i) is for the submission of the detailed budget and is therefore only relevant to the apparently successful applicant?

Answer No. 20: Confirmed.

Question No. 21: Per Page 7 in the strategic framework under Component 3 and also on page 11 under Component 3, the recipient is requested to issue local grants. What is the overall amount allocated for grants? Within that, is there a maximum size for each grant?

Answer No. 21: There is no limitation on the overall amount allocated to grants or a limitation on the size of each grant. This is subject to the applicant's approach.

Question No. 22: On page 25 under key personnel section, a Senior Component Leader position is listed. Can you please elaborate on the roles and responsibilities of the "Senior Component Leader" Key Personnel position? Do you envision this team member to oversee all three program components or should there be a Senior Component Leader for each of the three components?

Answer No. 22: Please note the following change in RFA requirements:

The applicants shall propose a Chief of Party and a Senior Gender Specialist based on the required qualifications for those two key personnel positions as stated in the RFA. However, the applicants are at liberty to propose and explain the configuration of other proposed key personnel in addition to or in substitution to the Senior Component Leader, the Capacity Building Specialist and the Communication and Outreach Specialist so long the applicants abide by the required qualifications for those three positions as stated in the RFA Amendment 2 (Answer No. 10) and based on the proposed technical approach of the applicants.

Question No. 23: Per page 30 under section IV, copies of audited financial statement for the last three years are requested for final cost application. We are a small business that does not meet the threshold of federal funding requiring an audit. Will financial statements for last three years prepared by an independent certified public accountant be sufficient?

Answer No. 23: Yes.

Question No. 24: If a for-profit firm participates as a sub-partner to the prime applicant, can the for-profit charge a fee for service?

Answer No. 24: Recipients and subrecipients are prohibited from charging profit under assistance awards. While profit is not allowed for assistance subawards, the prohibition does not apply when the recipient acquires goods and services (procurement contracts) in accordance with 22 CFR 226.40 to 48.

Question No. 25: Could USAID provide additional guidance or clarify expectations on how Syrian refugees should be incorporated into the proposed program, particularly in relation to Component 3?

Answer No. 25: USAID believes that Syrian refugees are impacting Jordanian communities and cannot be disregarded during program implementation especially in highly affected communities.

Question No. 26: Page 9 of the RFA states, "Expanding a social dialogue on this basis needs to be strategic, participatory, based on evidence from research and use results-oriented communication. It needs to be based on sound documentation, monitoring and evaluation." Can USAID clarify if the evidence base, research and documentation are to be gathered and presented by the prime applicant or does USAID already have such information from existing and current programs, or elsewhere, that you would prefer to be utilized and built on in the design of the social dialogue?

Answer No. 26: The program is expected to be an information hub on gender in Jordan and should therefore be able to identify additional sources of information.

Question No. 27: USAID mentions two external evaluations of the project to be conducted on page 14 of the RFA. Is the prime applicant expected to budget for these evaluations in the cost application for the program or will the evaluations be funded by another project, the third party contractor mentioned on page 20, or the USAID mission?

Answer No. 27: See Answer No. 8.

Question No. 28: Would USAID allow the applicant to change the title of a proposed key personnel position to better reflect and clarify their leadership role? For example, Senior Component Leader could be amended to "Senior Component Leader for Advocacy and Enforcement of Female Empowerment." Does USAID have a specific component of the 3 described in the RFA that they would like to see Senior Component Leader position concentrate on or is it up to the applicant to determine how to utilize this

position most effectively?

Answer No. 28: **See Answer No. 22.**

Question No. 29: Will the Mission consider extending the closing date for the RFA given the timing of the release coincided with a holiday period and there was no advance notification regarding the RFA?

Answer No. 29: **The closing date remains the same.**

Question No. 30: Will existing USAID implementing CAs be eligible for Window of Opportunity Grants in addition to Jordanian entities?

Answer No. 30: **Use of the Window of Opportunity will be decided upon during program implementation and is not envisioned to be programmed at this point.**

Question No. 31: On Page 14, the RFA states there will be two external evaluations of the project. In what year will the first of these evaluations be conducted? What type of evaluation is anticipated (household survey, qualitative, etc.).

Answer No. 31: **A decision will be made regarding evaluation timing and type by the Mission at a later stage.**

Question No. 32: On page 11, section, “Component 3: Improve Women and Girl-Centered Services,” the RFA states, “This component will be mainly achieved through interventions undertaken by activities and programs across USAID’s portfolio.” Please clarify if the Recipient will be considered a technical advisor to the other programs that issue grants across USAID’s portfolio or if the Recipient will be implementing the programs themselves, including issuing grants for services.

Answer No. 32: **See Answer No. 1.**

Question No. 33: Would USAID permit an alternative key personnel structure that reflects the proposed technical and management approach of the Recipient and that supports the effective participation of women, such as job sharing?

Answer No. 33: **See Answer No. 22.**

Question No. 34: The graphic detailing SDO #4 on page 7 states, “Integrate gender-sensitive messages in implementing partner events/materials” as one of the activities under Component 1. Can USAID clarify if the term “implementing partner” is also referring to a grantee or NGO involved on the project, not just USAID implementing partners?

Answer No. 34: All grantees and NGOs involved on the project must integrate gender-sensitive messages in events/materials.

Question No. 35: Is the Recipient permitted to provide financial support for the implementation of GOJ projects under this cooperative agreement?

Answer No. 35: Yes, however there are policy directives and required procedures for subcontracting with foreign governmental organizations.

Question No. 36: On page 5 under section “Introduction”, the RFA addresses Syrian refugees displaced in Jordan by stating, “This situation is, by extension, impacting the communities hosting them.” Given current guidance that funding from USAID Jordan cannot include direct assistance to refugees as PRM provides such funding, please clarify what is allowable under this cooperative agreement.

Answer No. 36: See Answer No. 25.

Question No. 37: On Page 27, under section, “Past Performance,” the RFA states, “The application shall include an Annex listing of all its relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years that required the placement of long-term key personnel.” Can USAID clarify if the Recipient should provide PPR forms for projects similar in technical area in addition to the list? If so, how many?

Answer No. 37: If Past Performance Reports are available, they can be submitted along with the list. This information assists in establishing the depth of the applicant’s past performance in similar projects. It is not in the applicant’s interest to abbreviate. However, only relevant programs should be included.